



3/31/2009

Dear Senators Patty Birkholz and Rebecca Warren,

As an owner and operator of Crystal Mountain Resort and Spa in Thompsonville, Michigan and the immediate past chair of the Michigan Travel Commission, thank you for sponsoring SB 388-89, to create a license plate fee funding system for State Parks, Forest Recreation and the Natural Resources Trust Fund.

Our business, which is located in rural Northwestern Michigan, welcomes over 300,000 visitors annually and employs over 800 people. Much of its value is derived from two of Michigan's most precious assets: natural resources and people. Our natural resources attract visitors, and our culture of hospitality brings them back. Though Crystal Mountain is a for-profit enterprise, it benefits from maintaining a high-quality State park and forest recreation system that showcases Michigan's natural beauty and recreational opportunities.

Though on a much smaller scale (thank heavens!) than the State Park and Forest system, Crystal Mountain is a capital intensive business located on 1,600 acres with over 300,000 sq. ft. of vertical structures and a broad array of equipment and infrastructure. Annually we invest capital sufficient to maintain plant and equipment. We do so to be sustainable and believe this is good business. We believe Michigan must also do so to insure the sustainability of our park, forest and recreational assets. SB 388-89 is a fine solution to accomplish this.

Therefore, I strongly request the Michigan Legislature pass this legislation. It is a wonderful opportunity to assure that our Park System will be a vital force in Michigan's renaissance and to preserve our treasures for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Chris MacInnes  
Chief Operating Officer & Immediate Past Chair of the Michigan Travel Commission

Cc Dr. Chuck Nelson  
Mr. Keith Charters, Chair, Natural Resources Commission